

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 2008 – Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co., a Chino, Calif., establishment, is voluntarily recalling approximately 143,383,823 pounds of raw and frozen beef products that FSIS has determined to be unfit for human food because the cattle did not receive complete and proper inspection. Through evidence obtained by FSIS, the establishment did not consistently contact the FSIS public health veterinarian in situations in which cattle became non-ambulatory after passing ante-mortem inspection, which is not compliant with FSIS regulations.

Such circumstances require that an FSIS public health veterinarian reassess the non-ambulatory cattle which are either condemned and prohibited from the food supply, or tagged as suspect. Suspect cattle receive a more thorough inspection after slaughter than is customary.

This noncompliant activity occurred occasionally over the past two years and therefore all beef product produced during the period of time for which evidence indicates such activity occurred has been determined by FSIS to be unfit for human consumption, and is, therefore, adulterated.

This recall is designated as Class II due to the remote probability that the beef being recalled would cause adverse health effects if consumed. FSIS made this determination because the animals passed ante-mortem inspection but should have been identified as suspect requiring additional inspection after slaughter to determine if there is evidence of disease, injury, or other signs of abnormalities that may have occurred after ante-mortem inspection.

The products subject to this recall were sent to wholesale distributors nationwide in bulk packages and are not available for direct purchase by consumers. All products subject to recall bear the establishment number “EST. 336” inside the USDA mark of inspection. The products were produced on various dates from Feb. 1, 2006 to Feb. 2, 2008.

Check your inventories and dispose of the products according to the following instructions.

The “HOLD” placed January 30, 2008 on Hallmark/Westland beef has now gone to “RECALL.”

What products are affected?

- Fine grind ground beef purchased by USDA from Hallmark/Westland identified by the Establishment Number (Est. 336).
- Further processed products produced from Hallmark/Westland meat provided by USDA identified...

All Hallmark/Westland product, including further processed products containing any amount of Hallmark/Westland meat must be destroyed and cannot be used or reconditioned for human consumption.

If your school has fewer than 50 cases, please follow the instructions below to dispose of items on hand and report the destruction to the Office of Public Instruction. **Once the product is disposed of, please complete the attached form (NAME) and return it to the OPI at...**

How to dispose of 50 cases or less of recalled products:

You are authorized immediately to destroy on-site 50 or fewer cases of USDA-purchased Hallmark/Westland fine grind ground beef. These products must be rendered unfit for human consumption according to destruction guidance from your State or local health authority.

- Product must be taken to a landfill, incinerated, or sent for inedible rendering.
- Destruction must be witnessed by a person of authority, (such as a food service director) and one other person.
- Each witness must sign the destruction verification form.
- The type of product, quantity, and destruction method must be noted on the form.

How to dispose of more than 50 cases:

The Office of Public Instruction will arrange for pick-up of more than 50 cases to be taken to a landfill, incinerated, or sent for inedible rendering.

Replacement Questions:

USDA will pursue every avenue available to provide replacement raw commodity. You will receive further information on this question at a later date.

Reimbursement Issues:

Non-reimbursable Expenses

The following are examples of, but not limited to, non-reimbursable expenses

- Storage at school level
- Overtime compensation for employees
- Long-distance phone calls and other associated administrative expenses
- Reimbursement for commercially-purchased food used in place of the recalled product

If you have questions, call School Nutrition Programs at (406) 444-4415 or (406) 444-2501.